

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

141444Z Sep 00

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ACTION AF-00

INFO	LOG-00	NP-00	AID-00	AMAD-00	CIAE-00	SMEC-00	DODE-00
	DOEE-00	SRPP-00	DS-00	EB-00	EUR-00	VC-00	H-01
	TEDE-00	INR-00	IO-00	JUSE-00	L-00	VCE-00	AC-01
	NSAE-00	OIC-02	OMB-01	OPIC-01	PA-00	PM-00	PRS-00
	ACE-00	P-00	SP-00	IRM-00	SSO-00	STR-00	TRSE-00
	USIE-00	PMB-00	DSCC-00	PRM-01	DRL-02	G-00	NFAT-00
	SAS-00	/009W					

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FM AMEMBASSY HARARE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7106
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
INFO NSC WASHDC IMMEDIATE
SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 HARARE 005187

SIPDIS

LONDON FOR CHARLES GURNEY
PARIS FOR BISA WILLIAMS

NSC FOR SENIOR AFRICA DIRECTOR GAYLE SMITH

E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/14/10

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [ZI](#) [MDC](#)

SUBJECT: RAID ON MDC HEADQUARTERS; ZIMBABWE POLICE
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PAGE 02 HARARE 05187 01 OF 02 141445Z
RATCHETS UP HARASSMENT OF OPPOSITION

REFTEL: HARARE 5075

CLASSIFIED BY AMB. TOM MCDONALD. REASONS: 1.5 (B) AND
(D).

1. (C) SUMMARY: AN OPPOSITION ADVISOR AND RELIABLE
EMBASSY CONTACT REPORTED TO THE AMBASSADOR SEPTEMBER 14
AN UPSURGE IN POLICE HARASSMENT OF THE OPPOSITION. AT
THE TOP OF THE LIST WAS A RAID ON THE MOVEMENT FOR
DEMOCRATIC CHANGE (MDC) HEADQUARTERS TODAY AND AN
ATTEMPT TO ARREST TWO SENIOR MDC OFFICIALS. POLICE ARE
ALSO REPORTED TO BE HARASSING OWNERS AND FARM WORKERS ON
FARMS IN THE HARARE AREA. THE POLICE ACTIONS MAY BE
PARTLY A GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO MDC CALLS FOR CIVIL
DISOBEDIENCE AND PARTLY AN ATTEMPT TO ASSERT MORE
CONTROL OVER A POLICE FORCE INCREASINGLY SYMPATHETIC TO
THE OPPOSITION. END SUMMARY.

2. MDC ADVISOR AND CONFIDANT CLIVE PUZEY CALLED ON THE
AMBASSADOR SEPTEMBER 14 ON SHORT NOTICE TO REPORT AN
UPSURGE IN POLICE HARASSMENT OF THE OPPOSITION. HE
STATED THAT THE ZIMBABWE REPUBLIC POLICE (ZRP) ENTERED
MDC HEADQUARTERS ON THE MORNING OF SEPTEMBER 14 WITH A
WARRANT TO SEARCH FOR HIDDEN ARMS CACHES. (UNKNOWN
ASSAILANTS SLIGHTLY DAMAGED THE HEADQUARTERS ENTRANCE
WITH A TYPE OF GRENADE LATE ON THE EVENING OF SEPTEMBER
11. SEE REFTEL.) HAVING FOUND NO WEAPONS, THE ZRP
ATTEMPTED TO ARREST, WITHOUT A WARRANT, TWO MDC
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OFFICIALS, ONE OF THEM BEING GANDI MUDZINGWA, MDC
PRESIDENT MORGAN TSVANGIRAI'S POLITICAL ASSISTANT AND
RIGHT-HAND MAN. PUZEY DID NOT KNOW THE IDENTITY OF THE
OTHER OFFICIAL BEING SOUGHT. (MORGAN TSVANGIRAI IS
CURRENTLY IN MANICALAND ON AN "OPINION CANVASSING" TRIP,
ACCORDING TO PUZEY). HAVING NOT FOUND EITHER OFFICIAL,
THE ZRP HAS SEALED OFF MDC HEADQUARTERS IN THE BELIEF
THAT THE TWO OFFICIALS ARE IN HIDING SOMEWHERE IN THE
BUILDING. PUZEY REPORTED THAT THE PRESS, MDC LAWYERS,
MDC MPS, AND OTHER SUPPORTERS HAVE BEEN CALLED TO THE
SCENE IN AN ATTEMPT TO PRESSURE THE ZRP TO LEAVE.

3. (C) PUZEY ALSO SAID THAT THE ZRP IS STEPPING UP ITS
HARASSMENT OF COMMERCIAL FARMERS AND OTHER PERCEIVED MDC
SUPPORTERS IN THE COUNTRYSIDE. HE CITED ONE FARMER NEAR
HARARE AS BEING SOUGHT BY THE ZRP FOR INCITING HIS
WORKERS TO ATTACK WAR VETERANS. THE FARMER CALLED IN
HIS LAWYER TO TRY TO KEEP THE POLICE AT BAY, BUT IT IS
UNKNOWN IF HE WAS DETAINED. THE "DAILY NEWS" REPORTED A
SIMILAR STORY SEPTEMBER 14 IN WHICH SEVERAL WAR VETERANS
WERE HOSPITALIZED AFTER "HEAVY FIGHTING" WITH FARM
WORKERS ON A HARARE-AREA FARM. THE FIGHTING WAS

REPORTEDLY SPARKED BY FARM WORKERS REACTING TO HARASSMENT BY THE WAR VETERANS. THE NEWS STORY INDICATED THAT POLICE OFFICERS LATER RETURNED TO THE FARM AND ACTED "OPENLY HOSTILE" TO THE WORKERS, BEGAN PUSHING AND SHOVING THEM, AND ACCUSED THEM OF BEING ANTOGONISTIC TO THE WAR VETERANS' CAUSE. THE WAR VETERANS, IN THE PRESENCE OF THE POLICE, THREATENED TO KILL THE FARM'S OWNER, ARTHUR HARLEY, FOR INCITING HIS WORKERS. HARLEY REPORTEDLY THEN WENT INTO HIDING.

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14. (C) WHEN ASKED WHY THE ZRP WAS SUDDENLY STEPPING UP ITS HARASSMENT OF THE MDC, PUZEY OFFERED A MULTITUDE OF POSSIBLE REASONS. HE CITED THE MDC'S CALLS FOR IMPEACHMENT OF PRESIDENT MUGABE, ITS CALLS LAST WEEK FOR CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE AND WORK STAY-AWAYS, AND THE GROWING CLAMOR FOR CHANGE COMING FROM THE MDC BENCH IN PARLIAMENT. HE ALSO STATED THAT SUPPORT FOR THE MDC IS GROWING IN THE ZRP, AND THAT SENIOR GOZ OFFICIALS HAVE DEMANDED THAT HIGH-RANKING POLICE OFFICIALS TAKE MORE ACTION IN FAVOR OF THE WAR VETERANS. THESE SENIOR OFFICIALS HAD THREATENED THE CHILDREN OF THESE POLICE OFFICERS IF THEY DID NOT TAKE ACTION, ACCORDING TO PUZEY. PUZEY ALSO MENTIONED THAT TRIBAL ELDERS ACROSS ZIMBABWE ARE FED UP WITH MUGABE AND WILL BE COMING TO HARARE SOON TO DEMAND CHANGES IN THE GOVERNMENT.

15. (C) COMMENT: PUZEY, A WELL-KNOWN LOCAL BUSINESSMAN AND RELIABLE EMBASSY CONTACT, APPEARED VERY DISTRAUGHT AT THE POLICE ACTION, THE FIRST OVERT GOVERNMENT ACTION AGAINST THE MDC SINCE IT CAPTURED 57 SEATS IN JUNE'S PARLIAMENTARY ELECTION. IT IS TOO EARLY TO TELL HOW FAR THIS WILL GO AND WHETHER THIS IS PART OF A WIDER NATIONWIDE CRACKDOWN ON OPPOSITION ACTIVITIES AND SUPPORTERS. THE PURPORTED THREATS AGAINST THE POLICE

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RATCHETS UP HARASSMENT OF OPPOSITION

OFFICERS ARE CREDIBLE AND COULD PARTLY INDICATE AN ATTEMPT BY THE GOZ TO EXERT POLITICAL CONTROL OVER A POLICE FORCE THAT INCREASINGLY SYMPATHIZES WITH THE OPPOSITION.

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